
Environmental Fact Sheet



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION 10

April 2001

IMPORTANT PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Drinking water wells near J.H. Baxter wood-treating facility to be tested for possible contamination

In a proposed agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), J.H. Baxter & Company will test some of the drinking water wells near its wood-treating facility in Arlington, Washington, for possible contamination. Since we do not currently know whether contaminated groundwater beneath the facility has moved to surrounding areas, some nearby landowners will be asked to allow testing of drinking water wells on their property. Under the agreement, known as an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC), the company will conduct a site-wide investigation and cleanup of soil and groundwater contamination, and take additional measures to handle stormwater at the facility.

You Are Encouraged to Comment!

Please take time to let us know your concerns about the proposed agreement.

15-day public comment period:
April 12 through April 27, 2001

Send your written comments no later than
April 27 to:

Kimberly Ogle, EPA Project Manager
U.S. EPA, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, WCM-126
Seattle, WA 98101

e-mail: ogle.kimberly@epa.gov

(E-mail comments must include your name and mailing address)

Please Join Us For an Open House on April 23

An informational open house has been scheduled for you to talk with EPA staff about the project and get answers to your questions. Come by at your convenience any time during the open house. We hope to see you there!

When: Monday, April 23, 2001 –
4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Where: Stillaguamish Senior Center
Arts and Crafts Room
18308 Smokey Point Blvd.
Arlington, Washington

Helpful Hint! Your comments will be most effective if you consider these guidelines:

- *Explain your views and tell us why you feel that way.*
 - *Do you support or disagree with the proposal? Be specific about which parts if you can.*
 - *Can you provide examples or offer alternatives?*
 - *Be sure to include your name and mailing address with your comments!*
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Background

J.H. Baxter & Company has owned and operated a 52-acre wood-treating facility located south of Arlington, near the Arlington Airport, since 1970. The facility produces telephone and power poles using a wood-preserving solution that contains a pesticide known as pentachlorophenol (PCP). As a result of these operations, groundwater beneath the facility has become contaminated with PCP. In addition, PCP has been detected in soils and stormwater at the site.

Frequently Asked Questions...

Whose wells will be tested?

Wells on all sides of the facility will be tested to make sure your water is safe. The attached map shows the proposed sampling boundary. If you live within this area, you may be asked to allow someone to test the wells on your property. Because we have information that suggests groundwater beneath the facility moves primarily in a north/northwest direction, many of the wells to be tested are in that area.

If contamination is found in any of the wells around the site, the sampling boundary will be expanded to ensure the safety of all potentially affected wells. Please do not hesitate to contact the EPA staff listed below if you have questions or concerns about the sampling.

How often will they be tested?

Wells will be tested two (2) times per year for a period of at least two (2) years to assure they remain free from contamination.

What if my well is contaminated?

If contamination is detected in any wells, J.H. Baxter would be required to provide an alternative source of water to those homes.

Why do I only have 15 days to comment?

EPA is working with the company to determine as soon as possible if the contamination has

moved beyond the facility boundary to other areas. We feel very strongly about the importance of allowing public comment on this decision, but we want to keep the process moving swiftly so that well testing may begin as soon as possible. The AOC will not be finalized until after the public meeting and the close of the public comment period.

What happens next?

This is only the first step in the cleanup process for the J.H. Baxter site. After completion of the site evaluation required by the AOC, there will be another opportunity for you to comment on the details of the cleanup process. In addition, EPA will provide periodic updates to the mailing list about the progress of cleanup at the site.

More Questions?

Please feel free to contact one of the following EPA staff if you have more questions about this project:

Kimberly Ogle, Project Manager
(206) 553-0955 or
e-mail: ogle.kimberly@epa.gov

Jennifer MacDonald,
Assistant Regional Counsel
(206) 553-8311 or
e-mail: macdonald.jennifer@epa.gov

Rene Fuentes, Hydrogeologist
(206) 553-1599 or
e-mail: fuentes.rene@epa.gov

Charles Bert,
Community Involvement Coordinator
(206) 553-0225 or
e-mail: bert.charles@epa.gov

Or call toll-free at 1-800-424-4372.



For More Information:

Copies of the administrative record for this site, including which wells will be sampled, can be viewed at the following locations:

EPA Regional Office Library
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA
(206) 553-1259
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Arlington Library
135 North Washington Avenue
Arlington, WA
(306) 435-3033
Call for hours

You may also visit the EPA Region 10 website at www.epa.gov/r10earth. Once there, click on "Index" and then "J" to find J.H. Baxter.

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by calling one of the numbers listed above.

How can I get Involved?

We are currently developing a mailing list for future updates and information about EPA activities at this site. If you did not receive this mailing directly, and would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact EPA at one of the numbers or e-mail addresses listed in this fact sheet. Thank you for your interest!

If you do not wish to receive future updates about this site, you may contact EPA to be removed from the mailing list.



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